

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local's Ontario Legislation ETFO Petition Speaking Notes

"This petition is really about safety and support — making sure classrooms have enough adults and resources so kids can learn and feel safe."

1. Class Sizes Are Bigger Than What Kids Need to Succeed

Ontario funding is based on averages of 24–26 students per class, but many classrooms have 30+ students. Larger classes mean less supervision, less individual attention, and more difficulty managing behaviour safely.

2. Students With Special Needs Aren't Getting Timely Supports

Nearly 6 in 10 students receiving special education support haven't had an IPRC, delaying services they're entitled to. Promises Unfulfilled shows student needs are rising, while supports like EAs have not increased at the same rate.

3. There Aren't Enough Adults in Schools

Funding supports roughly 1 educational assistant for every 10 students with special needs, even though many students require full-day or one-to-one support. When support staff are spread too thin, student safety and learning both suffer.

4. Violence And Safety Concerns Are Increasing

ETFO reports a significant rise in violent incidents in schools, often linked to unmet student needs and lack of supports. Schools without enough staff are less able to prevent, de-escalate, or respond safely, putting students and staff at risk.

5. Early Learning Environments Are Stretched Too Thin

Full-Day Kindergarten is funded for classes of 26, but many exceed that. Early years research shows smaller class sizes and stable staffing are essential for social-emotional development, self-regulation, and early literacy.

6. Early Intervention Is Being Missed

When early years classrooms lack support, learning and behavioural needs go unmet, often becoming bigger challenges later on. Promises Unfulfilled highlights that underfunding early intervention leads to higher costs and greater needs down the road.

7. The Education Funding Formula Is Outdated

Ontario's funding formula hasn't been meaningfully updated in over 20 years, despite more complex classrooms and increased safety needs. The system no longer reflects what today's students actually require.

8. This Petition Is About Safe, Supportive Schools

The petition calls for proper funding, smaller classes, more support staff, and safer learning environments. Public education serves over 2 million Ontario students, so funding decisions directly affect every community.

Scan the following QR code for Building Better Schools:

